DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 839 HE 014 254

AUTHOR Peterson, Harry L.
TITLE Coping with the 1980s: An Organizational Response to Retrenchment.
INSTITUTION American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO AASCU-S-1981/1
PUB DATE Mar 81
NOTE 29p.
AVAILABLE FROM American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, DC ($3.00).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; College Administration; College Faculty; College Presidents; *College Role; Educational Finance; *Faculty Development; Faculty Workload; *Flexible Scheduling; Higher Education; Leadership; *Organizational Change; Organizational Climate; Political Influences; Power Structure; Retrenchment; *School Schedules; *State Universities; Teacher Role; Teacher Salaries
IDENTIFIERS *Institutional Survival; *University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

ABSTRACT

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, a former state teachers college, undertook a major organizational change during the period 1974-1977. The chancellor, new to the position at that time, was faced with two mandates: (1) to "turn around" the institution, then facing retrenchment, and (2) to involve faculty in institutional decisionmaking. He organized a committee to propose a number of new academic calendars meeting specific conditions, and to circulate the proposals among the faculty for comment. The resulting calendar, largely a creation of the chancellor but integrating ideas from a variety of sources, allowed more flexibility of scheduling and funding for courses and faculty, continuous registration, improved staffing, and faculty development. The new calendar was felt to address organizational concerns deeper than the purely practical, such as accountability, relationships with the central administration, institutional distinction in mission and role within the state system, leadership within the institution, the faculty political structure, and organizational values changes. The project involved a political strategy focusing on short-term change to effect innovation where a long-term effort might not have worked and where the options for productive change were limited. A list of references is included. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED203839

COPING WITH THE 1980s:
AN ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE TO RETRENCHMENT

Harry L. Peterson
Assistant to the Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Madison

AASCU Studies 1981/1

Allan W. Ostar, President
Sandra K. Ralston, Editor

March 1981

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

AASCU

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

HE 014 254

Library of Congress No. 80-70969
Copyright—American Association of State Colleges and Universities

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I	Introduction	1
	From Teachers College to University	2
	Concepts of Study	3
II	The Mandate for Change	9
	Characteristics of Calendar Reform	9
	Goals of Calendar Reform	11
III	Concepts Applied	13
	Organizational Concepts	13
	Political Concepts	15
	Other Aspects of Calendar Reform	21
	Implementation	21
IV	Issues in Organizational Change	23
V	Summary	25
Bibliography		27

I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of reform and change within individuals and organizations is old and durable. It relates to fundamental convictions concerning the perfection or improvability of people and organizations, and the belief that individuals and their institutions must have meaning and purpose. Nowhere has the quest for change and meaning been more persistent than in higher education.

American higher education has concluded two decades in which it has coped with attacks from the outside and questioning within. The 1960s was a decade of rapid growth, marked by pressures to offer services to increasing numbers of minorities and to become more "relevant" to the interests of students and the needs of society. As difficult as this period was, it was a time of optimism and conviction on the part of many that higher education could solve problems.

In contrast, the 1970s was a decade of diminishing expectations; the beginning of a decline in the number of students at some schools, often signaling a reduction in the number of programs, faculty, and support services. For many institutions, change meant coping with the threat to survival.

Much has been written about both of these periods. The focus usually has been on the substantive effects of a proposal for change, and only rarely on the process by which that change has come about.

This report describes how a university undertook a major organizational change over a three-year period. It deals with the manner in which the head of the institution introduced the proposal, developed it, communicated it to the faculty, administration, and regents, and gathered support for its adoption. The school, the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, is a fairly typical former state teachers college which became a state university within the past 15 years.

The study deals with the period 1974 through 1977. It treats the university as a political system with conflicts among its members over goals and allocation of resources. It compares the change efforts of the head of the institution to those of a candidate for political office who attempts to convince constituents to endorse a particular vision of the future with their votes. It also analyzes the university utilizing four major elements: leadership, mission, environment, and resource base. These are elements which emphasize the interaction of an organization with its environment; a relationship which is becoming increasingly important in the 1980s in higher education.

Although the focus is on a particular institution, the history of the school, its mission, and its problems are similar to those of many institutions of higher education.

From Teachers College to University

Except for the work of writers like Sagen,[1] Harcleroad,[2] and Woodring,[3] non-selective, essentially open admissions schools have been largely ignored by writers in higher education. Dunham, another writer who has studied this type of institution, described them as "colleges of the forgotten Americans." He said:

> These 210 colleges and 69 universities represent over 10 percent of the country's higher educational institutions and enroll 21 percent of all students in higher education. This enrollment of 1 in 5 college students today will be 1 in 4 tomorrow and 1 in 3 the day after tomorrow.[4]

A large percentage of students attending non-selective, public schools are first generation college students, described by Cross as "the new students." She said, reflecting on the importance of the task of these schools:

> Our need now is not so much for further invention and production as for better distribution systems, a broader based education and more concern for individuals. The way to improve life for everyone is no longer to educate a few for positions of leadership, but rather to educate the mass to their full humanity.[5]

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh is one of over 250 institutions of higher education which made the transition from a strictly teacher training institution to a regional, liberal arts college and university. It is very similar to the other institutions in many respects, including the fact that it was characterized historically by a local orientation and a patriarchal, parochial leadership with a limited mission.

The schools were very responsive to their environment and changed, without much clear planning, as the needs of constituents changed. From teacher training schools they adapted to meet the growing social and economic aspirations of mostly working class Americans. As the first half of the twentieth century came to a close after World War II, young people began attending college in unprecedented numbers. The growth in American colleges and universities from the 1940s through the early 1970s was phenomenal. Nowhere was this experienced more directly than in what were initially small, public state colleges scattered throughout most of the states in the country.

---

[1]H. Bradley Sagen and Fred F. Harcleroad, "The Developing State Colleges and Universities: Innovation or Imitation?" *The North Central Association Quarterly*, 44 (Spring, 1970), pp. 345-351.

[2]Fred F. Harcleroad and H. Bradley Sagen, *Developing State Colleges and Universities*, (Washington, D.C.: American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1969).

[3]Paul Woodring, *The Higher Learning in America: A Reassessment*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968).

[4]E. Alden Dunham, *Colleges of the Forgotten Americans*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969).

[5]Patricia K. Cross, "New Students in the New World of Postsecondary Education," (paper read at the American Association of Higher Education Conference, Chicago, Illinois, March 1973), p. 2. (Mimeographed)

With more students, buildings had to be built to accommodate them and more teachers had to be hired to teach them. The more prestigious public universities also grew rapidly and educated many more undergraduates and graduate students than they had in the past. They often produced those students with doctorates who, in many cases, went off to teach their younger counterparts in the less prestigious state colleges. The rapid growth of the teachers colleges, combined with the training and socialization of their teachers at research-oriented schools, resulted in expectations on the part of faculty within these former teachers colleges which were high indeed. Throughout the country faculty and administrators began to speak of broadening their curriculum, offering graduate work and, in some cases, doctorates. The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh was a prototype of such an institution.

Meanwhile t[illegible] shared much of the trauma that all institutions—educational and [illegible]cational—experienced during the 1960s. The civil rights movement was active by 1960, and attracted white students from throughout the country. The movement was a training ground for young people who attempted to make their beliefs about freedom and equality—many of which they had learned in their colleges and universities—a reality. Ultimately, the institutions which had been a training ground for young civil rights workers became the focus of the changes they helped bring about. Black and other minority students were recruited to state colleges and universities, although in many instances the campuses were not prepared to deal with their educational needs or the consequences of heightened racial activism.

Although virtually every school in the country was affected by these major upheavals, the state colleges and universities were particularly affected as in many cases they had less public support of powerful interests and were vulnerable to their political and geographic environments.

The disenchantment which many people began to feel toward higher education in a time of high unemployment (and what appeared to be a period of reduced opportunities for social mobility) produced problems for colleges and universities. Few schools were hit harder than the UW-O, which had depended almost exclusively on working class, first generation college students for its clientele.

Finally, the lagging increase in the number of eighteen-year-olds in the population meant that some schools experienced reduced enrollment, resulting in a diminished resource base. The combination of internal conflicts, societal disenchantment with higher education, and a reduced resource base was difficult for many schools. The UW-O was no exception.

At the same time, program expansion diluted the importance of the teacher education function at most state colleges and dissipated the earlier missions. Members of the institutions did not derive a substitute mission from their environments, nor did they have the autonomy to develop one independent from that environment. As a result, there were many schools in the United States in the late 1970s with little clear direction as to their goals or missions.

Concepts of Study

Politics and Innovation

The emphasis on the political aspects of organizational life has important

implications for the study of innovation. Specifically, comparisons can be made between a political campaign and a major reform effort:[6]

1. Campaigns begin by consolidating basic support and expanding upon it.

2. It is important to attempt to expand the base of support without losing the early, basic core of supporters.

3. Reform proposals are shaped through an interactive process between the leadership and the various constituencies.

4. Appeals by the leadership involve the simultaneous use of inducements and fear in order to gain support. This entails appeals to ideological considerations which are important to constituents, and to concerns about the most fundamental interest of all, survival.

5. In both a political campaign and a major organizational innovation, the results are likely to be perceived clearly as producing winners and losers. Patronage is present in both political campaigns and organizational reforms. Winners are promoted substantively in terms of promotions and titles and symbolically by access to the leadership and information, while losers forfeit access to promotion and influence and sometimes their jobs.

6. The winners have a mandate for change as a result of winning. Simultaneously, the winners' mandate is sharpened as both the majority and minority factions watch carefully to see if the campaign promises are carried out.

7. As a result of a power change the symbols of power and influence are revised abruptly. Relationships and knowledge which once were prized highly are suddenly of little political value as other relationships and information gain importance. This can be referred to as the "currency" or means of exchange within an organization.

Organizational Concepts

The emphasis in this study on the elements of leadership, environment, resource base, and institutional mission or mandate is consistent with the approach to organizations taken by the institutional school of sociology. Each of these elements is interrelated, as will become clear throughout this study.

Resource base. The resource base of an organization includes the various elements which provide support for its existence. With many schools this would include an endowment, governmental and private grants to support the institution, research funding, alumni, and income producing programs, such as intercollegiate football at some institutions. A large number of support sources and large amounts of support often result in a more autonomous university as they constitute countervailing forces which allow the institution to allocate resources with fewer restrictions. For example, a large, heterogeneous school can maintain a successful athletic program, and keep

[6]For the other side of the relationship between organization and politics see, Xandra Kayden, "The Political Campaign as an Organization," *Public Policy*, 21 (Spring, 1973), pp. 263-290.

one element of its support relatively happy, in spite of alumni discontent with other aspects of the institution, such as the presence of radical professors.

In contrast, schools which depend upon a few donors or on student enrollment and tuition for their continued existence may have a limited number of organizational choices. This is particularly true of an organization such as the UW-O which must rely upon its clientele for continued existence, but has little control over the quality and number of clientele it serves. An institution that primarily serves individuals within commuting distance must reflect to a large extent the goals and aspirations of the community.

Clark[7,8] has reported how a community college and an adult education program transformed their goals by being responsive to students. Without a strong, independent, ideological and financial commitment, organizations must adopt a "democratic" stance, offering courses with high enrollment, or the base of support will be eroded. In its purest form, this represents a "free market" approach to education in which the consumer determines the nature of the education. As Leslie and Brugel[9] pointed out, this assumes that the institution has no influence over tuition costs and allows the market to set the prices, and that any school is free to decide whether or not to continue to exist. Neither of these conditions are present in their pure form in higher education.

Environment. The knowledge of how the environment influences in organization has not been developed as fully as the understanding of the internal functioning of institutions.[10] Perrow noted that the environment includes cultural constraints and the presence of other organizations.[11] The environment for the UW-O and many similar schools includes aspects of the resource base; the surrounding community; the presence of other schools, particularly those which are similar and compete for the same students; the central administration, which may oversee much of its operation; the trustees who act as a buffer between the university and the larger society and as a controlling agent; the legislature; and the governor. Virtually all of these tend to shape the direction the school takes on major policies.

Organizations in higher education emphasize the symbols of knowledge creation and preservation: science, scholarship, and academic freedom. To the extent that the symbols are emphasized by higher education and accepted by the larger society, the symbols serve as a membrane protecting the organization from its environment. In the case of higher education, they are developed by prestigious universities and then embraced by other institutions. Perrow[12] has noted that this may have the effect of creating internal con-

---

[7]Burton R. Clark, *The Open Door Colleges*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960).

[8]Burton R. Clark, "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values: A Case Study," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (June, 1956), pp. 327-336.

[9]Larry L. Leslie and John F. Brugel, "Financing Learner-Centered Reforms," (paper presented at the 30th Annual National Conference on Higher Education,1975), p. 4. (Mimeographed)

[10]Charles B. Perrow, *Organizational Analysis: A Sociological View*, (Belmont, California: Brook/Cole Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 92-132.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Charles Perrow, "Organizational Prestige: Some Functions and Dysfunctions," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 66, 4 (January, 1961), pp. 335-341.

flicts and diverting resources to nonessential functions. Riesman[13] has discussed the dysfunctional aspects of the less prestigious institutions emulating the older, renowned universities.

The relationship between an organization and its environment varies considerably, depending upon the public demand for the product or services provided by the organization and its general responsiveness. Virtually all organizations ultimately must be responsive to their environment, although the period of adjustment may vary considerably.[14]

Leadership. If organizations are political, with conflict inherent in the decision-making, what helps hold the institution together? The answer provided by the structuralists is that leadership is the essential ingredient. Selznick declared:

> Leadership creates and molds an organization embodying—in thought and feeling and habit—the value premises of policy. Leadership reconciles internal strivings and environmental pressures, paying close attention to the way adaptive behavior brings about changes in organizational character. When an organization lacks leadership, these tasks are inadequately fulfilled, however expert the flow of paper and however smooth the channels of communication and command.[15]

Selznick listed the tasks of the leaders as: (1) the definition of institutional mission and role; (2) the institutional embodiment of purpose; (3) the defense of institutional integrity; and, (4) the ordering of internal conflict.[16]

Understanding the process of selecting a leader becomes particularly important in the political analysis of an enterprise, including higher education.

Institutional mission. The resource base, environment, leadership, and history of an organization all interact to shape the institutional mission of the organization. The institutional mission which some organizations possess is an overriding sense of purpose which unites efforts for a common goal, despite individual or group differences. Often it takes a threat to the survival of the organization for this common purpose to emerge. Effective leadership can help develop this sense of mission, particularly if the history of the organization is one which the present day members can recall with pride as embodying the symbols which are important to them.

Clark[17] studied Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore as institutions which have developed highly individualistic, clearly defined, favorable images which tend to be perpetuated by the self-selection of faculty and students who go to these schools because of their reputation. He described this organizational self-image as an organizational saga.

---

[13]David Riesman, *Constraint and Variety in American Education*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1958), Chapter 1.

[14]Jacob W. Getzels, James M. Lipham, and Ronald F. Campbell, *Educational Administration as a Social Process*, (Evanston: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 154.

[15]Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 62.

[16]Ibid., pp. 62-63.

[17]Burton R. Clark, *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore*, (Chicago: Aldine, 1970).

> An organizational saga is a collective understanding of unique accomplishment in a formally established group. The group's definition of the accomplishment, intrinsically historical but embellished through retelling and rewriting, links stages of organizational development. The participants have added affect, an emotional loading, which places their conception between the coolness of rational purpose and the warmth of sentiment found in religion and magic. An organizational saga presents some rational explanation of how certain means led to certain ends, but it also includes affect that turns a formal place into a beloved institution, to which participants may be passionately devoted.[18]

Lunsford[19] noted that it is particularly important for institutions with "vague goals and ambiguous formal relationships" to have "socially integrating myths that help to hold the loosely coordinated organization together and give its members a 'sense of mission.'

Institutions with prestigious histories, sufficient resource bases, and high quality student bodies have many advantages in developing a strong institutional mission. These prestigious schools create difficulties for institutions lacking a clear, internally agreed upon mission, and experiencing rapid changes in growth, legal mandate and name changes, as they often look to the renowned schools for an image of their own.

---

[18]Burton R. Clark, "The Organizational Saga in Higher Education," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17 (1972), p. 178.

[19]Terry F. Lunsford, "Authority and Ideology in the Administered University," *The State of the University*, ed. Carlos E. Kruybosch and Sheldon L. Messinger, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1968), p. 101.

II. THE MANDATE FOR CHANGE

The Role of Calendar Reform

Late in 1973, a search and screen committee, composed of UW-Oshkosh faculty, student representatives, and an administrator from the central administration, forwarded the names of five candidates for chancellor to the University of Wisconsin president. The president recommended, and the regents confirmed, Robert Birnbaum as the new UW-Oshkosh chancellor, to be effective in February 1974. Birnbaum replaced an individual who had been chancellor for 14 years. This selection process at Oshkosh was the first involving a formal search and screen committee, and the first which included a national search for candidates.

Usually when a new regime takes over an organization, or when a new government is elected, there is a broad but vague mandate for change and revitalization. The mandate usually is introduced, at least in part, from outside the organization. Invariably there are those within the organization who do not want change because they are comfortable with the present situation and secure in the benefits it produces for them. Also, there are some within the organization who initially support the general mandate, but resist when they realize that the changes will affect them. Thus, it is the challenge of the new leadership to translate the broad mandate to a specific, workable proposal, or series of proposals, for change.

Chancellor Birnbaum was faced with two simultaneous–and at times conflicting–mandates: one, to "turn UW-O around," and two, to involve the faculty in decision-making. The Chancellor exercised his mandate through the strategy of a calendar reform proposal: introducing significant change at the institution, while doing it in a democratic fashion.

In a nontraditional, less hierarchical organization where authority is negotiated constantly, such as a university, individuals within the organization must seek to maximize their authority, if they expect to be able to initiate change. Calendar reform represented a personal opportunity for Birnbaum to legitimize his authority on the campus; it became the operational vehicle for the mandate to change the UW-O.

Characteristics of Calendar Reform

In spring 1974, Birnbaum announced the creation of the Ad Hoc Calendar Committee composed of faculty, students and administrators. Their charge was to prepare a number of "draft calendars" which. . .meet all or most of the following conditions:

(a) Classes commence after Labor Day, and the winter recess does not come in the middle of an instructional term.

(b) The calendar has a minimum of 170 days of instruction.

(c) It considers the use of 60-minute periods and fewer weeks per term than in the present calendar.

(d) It creates maximum flexibility for scheduling courses which may have differing requirements relating to course length and intensity of instruction.

(e) It creates maximum flexibility to satisfy educational and scholarly needs of faculty and students.[20]

He also asked that these models be circulated among members of the faculty, Faculty Senate, student government, and administrators to "elicit comments." The Ad Hoc committee was then to refine its ideas and submit a model to the Chancellor, who would distribute copies of the proposal to the Faculty Senate, student government, and the Administrative Council for recommendations to the Chancellor.

The Chancellor needed something which would provide a foothold to launch his change effort. The process of a representative committee, meeting regularly and providing a forum to consider ideas from various UW-O groups, might have been that foothold. However, the Ad Hoc Committee reported in July 1974 with a proposal which was considerably more narrow than the Chancellor had wished.

On June 28, 1974, the Chancellor wrote a senior vice president in central administration in Madison outlining the basic elements of a calendar reform proposal. The central administration responded on August 23, 1974, with an endorsement not unexpected by Birnbaum: "This is a bold effort to meet forthrightly the educational challenge of the 1970s and 1980s."[21] The central administration also promised an effort to provide more generous funding, different from the student credit hour funding formula used by the other schools. Unlike the report of the Ad Hoc Calendar Committee, which did not provide a broad mandate with which to approach the UW-O faculty, the response from the central administration did provide that device. The initial commitment to a different funding formula was extremely helpful. The calendar reform proposal, although it included ideas from a variety of sources within the university, was mostly a creation of the Chancellor.

In Fall 1974, 13 "calendar papers" were distributed to the faculty. Among the major points presented in the final paper were:

(1) The university calendar will be divided into three semesters, including a summer semester of eight weeks with two four-week terms, and a fall and spring semester each of 17 weeks with two seven-week terms and a three-week term.

(2) The fall semester will begin after Labor Day, and the first 14 weeks of the semester will end before Christmas.

(3) The new calendar will permit courses to be offered in a variety of formats including the traditional schedule of three credits for three meetings a week over an extended period (14 weeks). . . The determination of course format and length will remain a faculty prerogative, based upon the logic of the material and student needs.

---

[20]Robert Birnbaum, Memo to Ad Hoc Calendar Committee, May 22, 1974.

[21]Donald K. Smith and Donald E. Percy, Letter to Robert Birnbaum, Senior Vice Presidents, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, August 23, 1974, p. 1.

(4) Faculty will have nine-month contracts which will in most cases include the traditional September-May period, but which in a small number of cases may include other contiguous nine-month periods.

(5) Any change or adjustment made in the workload of non-teaching support faculty who now have nine-month contracts shall be done within the spirit of the policies affecting teaching faculty so that the relationships of the workloads of both groups is maintained under the new calendar.

(6) Faculty preferences will be a primary consideration in arranging individual schedules, and requests for terms on- and off-campus honored to the extent that they are consistent with program needs and the requests of other colleagues.

Goals of Calendar Reform

In a speech to the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents during the first year under the new calendar, Birnbaum described the major objectives of the reform as student flexibility, continuous registration, improved staffing, and faculty development. He described the possibility of courses of various lengths designed to fit the needs of the students and the subject matter; changes that would permit registration throughout the year, rather than grouping all of the student registration into a one-week period.

> Although CR (calendar reform) is cost-effective, reduces the student and administrative trauma usually associated with registration, and provides maximum flexibility for traditional students, it has an additional major purpose of allowing students to enter the University and enroll in courses which do not necessarily begin with the first day of the traditional semester.[22]

A total of 551 new students had enrolled at periods different from the regular fall semester registration.

In describing the different staffing arrangements, he said:

> . . .the University is now able to assign faculty to teach courses at various times during the calendar year, including summer, as a part of their regular teaching load. In making assignments, faculty preference is fully considered in the context of curriculum needs, and no faculty member is required to have formal classroom teaching assignments for more than 34 contiguous weeks. All faculty are thus guaranteed a lengthy annual vacation, although for some it may occur in the fall or spring rather than the summer.[23]

---

[22]Robert Birnbaum, "The University of Alternatives: The First Semester of the Oshkosh Calendar Plan," Progress Report to the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, February, 1976, p. 5.

[23]Ibid., pp. 6-7

Birnbaum described the faculty development portion of the calendar reform as including a research component" of $50,000 per year allocated by a faculty committee to professors who designed projects in which:

> The primary objective. . .is. . .not the creation of new knowledge (although this may be the result of many of the projects) but the self-renewal of faculty to inform their teaching and contribute to the intellectual vitality of the campus.[24]

The "curriculum development component," supported with a $100,000 annual budget,

> . . .promotes innovative teaching techniques, the application of new technologies, flexible instructional patterns, and the development of interdisciplinary curriculum.[25]

What he described as the "in-service component" included the Faculty College, the institutional needs program, and the off-campus program.

> The Faculty College is a program of concentrated in-service educational opportunities by and for UW-Oshkosh faculty, staff and administration.[26]

Institutional needs are areas which are of concern to the university at large and for which faculty were invited to submit proposals for support. Funded proposals included a study of collective bargaining in higher education, a review of published material on grading policies, and an investigation of general education. The off-campus program provided money for faculty to study where the special programs were available. The university institutes program

> . . .will provide extended opportunities for faculty from many departments and colleges to work together with advanced students, thus providing both an opportunity for professional development and a new forum for revitalizing the undergraduate and graduate curriculum.[27]

Birnbaum also discussed the evaluation of the calendar changes which were being undertaken, administrative changes which had been instituted to implement the calendar proposals, and enrollment changes. Birnbaum reported to the Board that, "Our actual 1975-76 enrollment is 6.2 percent above last year, and 10.4 percent over projections made just one year ago."[28]

---

[24]Ibid., p. 10.
[25]Ibid., p. 12.
[26]Ibid., p. 13.
[27]Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[28]Ibid.

III. CONCEPTS APPLIED

Organizational Concepts

The preceding chapter summarized the manifest goals of calendar reform and noted the characteristics of the calendar designed to achieve these goals. As with most strategies, certain unstated elements were present whose effect upon the university was far-reaching. To describe the elements, this section applies the concepts of environment, mission and resources, and leadership discussed in Chapter I.

Environment

One of the most important aspects of calendar reform is the effect it had upon UW-O's relationship with the central administration of the University of Wisconsin system. The emphasis on accountability in higher education has increased as the public in general, and the legislature in particular, demands to know how public monies are being spent. Some central coordinating bodies have taken steps to develop standard criteria to evaluate and compare the various campuses within a system: for example, classifications utilizing square feet of classroom space, ratios of faculty to administrators and faculty to members of the student body, and costs of producing student credit hours. To the extent that a central body can convert costs into readily understandable criteria, it is able to interpret to the people to whom it reports—the trustees and the legislature—how well its units are performing. This, of course, also allows such a body to exercise control over its subunits. Thus, the tension between a campus and the central administration often takes place around questions of autonomy. Representatives of a campus invariably argue that its situation is unique and therefore, it ought to be treated differently. Central administration officials, on the other hand, point out that a particular campus is performing a certain task with fewer dollars than the campus in question.

The calendar proposal enabled the university to be funded differently from the student credit hour formula that determined the funding for the other schools in the university system. This gave the university not only a *stable* resource base over the next two years, but a *larger* resource base. The university system had committed itself to a level of funding that would remain stable even if the enrollment at the UW-O declined. Because its enrollment had declined steadily over the several years prior to calendar reform, this commitment may have contributed as much as one million dollars more than what the traditional formula would have yielded during the succeeding two years.

Developing a system which needed to be treated by rules different from those applied to the other schools in the system was one of the most important aspects of calendar reform. Developing greater autonomy from central administration with regard to funding, and other matters as well, was probably as important as any inherent merits in the calendar reform proposal itself.

Mission and Resources

Another important aspect of calendar reform, and a constant theme running through Birnbaum's proposals, was the goal of making the UW-O a distinctively different school in the state of Wisconsin. At departmental meetings where Birnbaum explained and promoted the calendar proposal, he reminded faculty that during the 1970s, it was no longer sufficient to be "close and cheap" for prospective students. It was necessary to develop an

organizational saga which would prove durable and attractive. The model attempted during the 1960s, however fitfully and without consensus, was that of the prestigious graduate school. It was necessary to develop a different model, one with a potential saga which was distinctive, but which was still flexible enough to be responsive to the changing college student market.

A University of Alternatives, for which calendar reform was the major instrument, was just such a model. With an explicit purpose of responding to changing students' interests, it could continually change programs and curricula without being accused of "selling out" its mission. A sufficiently central theme is necessary in order that the image does not become too blurred. The problems studied by Burton Clark are examples of institutional responsiveness taken to an extreme.

The manifest goals of providing greater flexibility for students and faculty, greater autonomy in its relationship with central administration, and a distinctive identity flexible enough to respond to changing student needs, were the most important aspects of the organizational change known as calendar reform. These aspects are part of the *process* of calendar reform, rather than the *product*. The three areas were tied directly to the substantive issues involved in calendar reform.

Leadership

As noted in Chapter II, calendar reform became the vehicle for the mandate to change the UW-O; and it also represented a personal opportunity for Birnbaum to legitimize his authority on the campus. In most organizations, a challenge to the mandate for change almost inevitably comes within the first six months or year of the introduction of new leadership. The calendar vote was the challenge for Robert Birnbaum.

The faculty, because of their numbers and diversity, usually are unable to initiate major change. Positive, assertive behavior of a large body is difficult to obtain without a high degree of consensus; the faculty more often exercises its influence through the use of the veto. From the perspective of the individual faculty member, who might be one of several hundred faculty, the idea of mobilizing power is difficult, if not hopeless. The vote on the calendar reform proposal, the process by which it was introduced, and the manner in which it was implemented, was a legitimizing of the Chancellor's authority by the faculty.

Another aspect of the leadership question was the attempt to convert the enrollment crisis, which had created internal dissension over competition for resources, into a device which would create cohesion within the UW-O community. The first important part of this effort was to persuade the central administration to fund the campus on a basis other than that of student credit hours for the two-year experimental period. This alleviated somewhat the internal competition for funds. The second part was to appeal to the faculty to give up something for themselves on behalf of the University as a whole. Some members of the faculty would have to forego summer school income because the workloads would be dispersed throughout the year; and faculty who formerly taught summer school might take time off during a light spring semester and teach during the summer at no extra compensation. This made it possible to retain more faculty, and the greater calendar flexibility could result in greater student enrollment, with a larger resource base for the university as a whole. However, it also represented risk to the individuals because there was no guarantee of a return on the part of the investor. The Chancellor addressed this in his speech to the faculty before they voted on calendar reform:

> While it is true that the proposed calendar may have limited negative personal consequences for some, I believe that in the long run it will prove to be a major asset for all. . .Weakness in one will ultimately lead to weakness in all.[29]

Political Concepts

It has been suggested that a useful comparison could be drawn between a political campaign and an effort by a leader to bring about organizational change. The analogy is particularly apt if an organization is viewed as a political entity with constituencies, inherent conflict, and negotiated authority rather than bureaucratically ordered authority. This section will elaborate upon the seven propositions listed in Chapter I.

1. Campaigns begin by consolidating basic support and expanding upon it.

This is elementary in political campaigns. The basic core of support is often responsible for assisting the politician initially and is apt to be the most loyal. In 1964 Barry Goldwater counted upon the right wing of the Republican party to provide financial and volunteer support. Similarly, Hubert Humphrey in 1968 was able to rely on labor support for workers and money. George McGovern in 1972 went to college campuses and anti-war groups for assistance.

Robert Birnbaum was most easily able to go to the students to gain initial support. Students were seeking relief from the previous administration which had not been responsive to them. They had the least to lose by a change in administration. This was significantly different from the faculty and the administrators who, even though they were for the most part pleased that a new chancellor had arrived, had worked out accommodations with the earlier regime. Some members of the faculty and administration had something to gain, while others had something to lose. The previous chancellor, passive and nonresponsive to faculty demands, had allowed the academic deans a high degree of authority and autonomy. Similarly, some administrators had enjoyed less supervision than they might under a new administration. Dealing with these two constituent groups was a more difficult matter than appealing to the students who were less involved with the institution, or involved for a shorter period of time.

Very soon after his arrival at UW-O, Birnbaum met with representatives from student government and the student newspaper. In addition, he attended meetings of these groups and spoke at their meetings. He provided them with information concerning his change proposals and consulted with student government representatives before his important speech to the All-University Convocation, given about six weeks after his arrival on campus. He consistently placed students on important committees, including campus search-and-screen committees recruiting for key administrative positions.

The attention paid to these groups was reflected in the publicity which his calendar proposal received through the campus paper as well as its early editorial support, and the endorsement of his proposal by the student government. Most importantly, student government and the student newspaper provided a means by which he could communicate with the student body at

---

[29]Robert Birnbaum, speech to the faculty, October 17, 1974.

large to help convey a new atmosphere of change and openness on the UW-O campus. In solidifying his support among the students, Birnbaum was able to develop an important constituency.

2. It is important to attempt to expand the base of support without losing the early, basic core of supporters.

One of the major strategies of the Nixon administration during the 1972 campaign was an effort to develop support among labor and minorities, groups which generally had not been favorable toward him in earlier elections. Special committees within his campaign were formed to help secure this help. This was done symbolically, such as by playing golf with AFL-CIO President George Meany, and substantively, by appointing a former labor leader as secretary of labor. All of these efforts were made in a manner designed not to offend his regular constituency of moderate and conservative Republicans.

Similarly, Birnbaum, having obtained the support of the student body, behaved in ways designed to convince the faculty that he was responsive to their needs. Much of the laborious public involvement of faculty members during early budget deliberations was a painstaking process of instituting faculty governance in particular, and more democratic decision-making in general. This could be done without great concern for losing the support of the administration because many of them, directly or indirectly, served at the pleasure of the chancellor.

One complication during this process was that faculty members who worked with Birnbaum and then played the role of explaining his position to the larger faculty, were seen by some as "sell outs" who had been coopted by the administration. Some organizations attempted to gain greater legitimacy among the faculty by criticizing the administration. Because faculty governance had been unsuccessful for so long, there was also difficulty in finding faculty members who were in legitimate and recognized positions of power with whom he could communicate.

Another group with which it was important for the chancellor to work was central administration. He was able to do this rather easily because that body had no clear notion of how the UW-O might proceed to change. Thus, he was given a relatively free hand. In regular meetings which he held with senior administrators on campus, he made it clear that he was playing an aggressive role with central administration. These are examples of attempts to broaden his base of support without losing the support of other groups.

3. Reform proposals are shaped through an interactive process between the leadership and the various constituencies.[30]

One mark of a successful campaigner is the extent to which the candidate is able to elicit and maintain support of important constituent groups without pledging support on specific issues which a group might demand as a condition of that support. Conversely, the mark of group effectiveness is the extent to which it is able to successfully make demands on candidates and then get those candidates elected. The interaction in which the special

---

[30]James D. Thompson and William J. McEwan, "Organizational Goals and Environment: Goal-Setting as an Interaction Process," *American Sociological Review*, 23 (February, 1948), pp. 23-31.

interest groups and the candidate vie for maximum advantage is constant throughout a campaign. A problem with promising too much to any one group is the distinct possibility that commitments to that group will offend other potential supporters. Thus, for example, pledges which George McGovern made to feminist groups and racial minorities alienated and resulted in less support from other constituencies, such as organized labor. Although the commitment process is risky, it is essential in politics. It is essential because any candidate who has a hope of winning, and any group which has a hope of influencing, needs the other to advance respective goals.

This was true of Robert Birnbaum with regard to calendar reform. Because of the suspicion and hostility of the faculty toward the administration, he needed to go to extra efforts to convince the faculty that the idea, mostly his own, could be influenced and shaped through their efforts. In obtaining their support he hoped to develop a proposal which eventually would be adopted through the referendum. It was for this reason that he announced to the faculty in the first calendar paper that he would:

> Schedule meetings with each academic department to discuss the proposal, solicit reactions and receive recommendations for improvement, alteration or alternative approaches.
>
> .....
>
> I wish to emphasize to you that no decisions concerning the calendar have been made, nor will they be made until this process is completed.[31]

The emphasis upon faculty involvement at the beginning and throughout the development and advocacy of the calendar proposal was a central theme. It was necessary to have faculty support for changes which would have to be implemented by the faculty. It was particularly important to be careful in eliciting and gaining that support due to the mistrust which had built up during the previous administration.

Early reform proposals can be seen as campaign promises in that they are offered to evoke a response from the constituents to gain their support. The resulting process is one of mutual compromise between the leadership and the constituents, resulting in mutual cooptation[32] and a safer environment for both parties.

> 4. Appeals by the leadership involve the simultaneous use of inducements and fear in order to gain support. This entails appeals to ideological considerations which are important to the constituents, and to concerns about the most fundamental interest of all, survival.

These appeals range from explicit promises, such as pledges by Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern during the 1972 presidential primaries to appoint minority members to the Supreme Court, to more general promises, including Eisenhower's promise in 1952 to end the war in Korea, or Nixon's plan in 1968 to end the war in Vietnam. They also can include—

---

31 Robert Birnbaum, *Calendar Paper* No. 1, p. 1.

32 "Cooptation in administration is a process whereby either power or the burdens of power, or both, are shared." Selznick, *TVA and the Grass Roots*, p. 259.

and usually do—more vague commitments, such as returning "decency and honesty" to government, if elected. The more vague the promise the safer the candidate, because the less likely is he to offend a group which has a different orientation, and the more likely is the statement to appeal to many constituents.

Appeals to fears are at least as important in campaigns. Thus, Lyndon Johnson's portrayal in 1964 of Barry Goldwater as a dangerous radical who might end social security and who would risk nuclear war played a major role in the landslide election of Johnson that year. Depicting the opposition as impulsive and incompetent is particularly potent. It is an important and powerful tool of the incumbent who can contrast his record of achievement and experience with that of his challenger.

Birnbaum used inducements and fears throughout his campaign to sell calendar reform. He frequently reminded faculty members of the possibility of greater autonomy and time for research opportunities. Offering such an opportunity to the faculty met a practical need and was attractive to the values of the faculty because autonomy is greatly prized in higher education. Birnbaum stressed the "opportunity" to teach course material in a time period which most readily fit the subject matter, while stressing that they would not be forced to make such changes.

At the same time he stressed the problems of doing nothing at the school. He emphasized the demographic changes in the state and the nation that would mean fewer young people graduating from high school in the near future. He also stressed the problems which other schools were having with enrollment, including the fear that a number of institutions of higher learning were *going out of existence* because they had not responded to the new needs of students.

5. In both a political campaign and a major organizational innovation, the results are likely to be perceived clearly as producing winners and losers. Patronage is present in both political campaigns and organizational reforms. Winners are promoted substantively in terms of promotions and titles and symbolically by access to the leadership and information, while losers forfeit access to promotion and influence and sometimes their jobs.

Examples of this in electoral politics are particularly dramatic in cities and states where civil service systems are less highly developed. In Chicago, for example, Mayor Daley was able to dispense literally thousands of jobs and perform, through his precinct supporters, favors such as efficient trash collection and street improvements. When changes in leadership are made, old alliances are broken dramatically and abruptly. Individuals who had influence no longer have that influence.

On the Oshkosh campus there were individuals who supported calendar change and those who opposed it, overtly or covertly. Several individuals within the administration were promoted, partially as a result of this support. Of the six people within the administration who opposed calendar reform, openly or discreetly, two left campus and one stayed on campus and was demoted.

Of course, the promotions departures of these persons is more complicated than simple support or opposition for calendar change, but the pattern is rather clear. On the Oshkosh campus a rather loose "team" emerged whose job it was to guide calendar change, be alert for whatever

changes might need to be made to help insure its continuation, and support its implementation in formal and informal contacts with students, faculty, and administrators.

> 6. The winners have a mandate for change as a result of winning. Simultaneously, the winners' mandate is sharpened as both the majority and minority factions watch carefully to see if the campaign promises are carried out.

In electoral politics this is more obvious in a parlimentary system such as exists in England. There the opposition party regularly issues position statements outlining the course of action they would take, if they were in power. In the United States, the parties are more diffuse and heterogeneous and exhibit less discipline than those in England. Although the opposition is critical of those in power, any opposition leader is unable to claim to speak for even the majority of his party, and hence tends to be more vague and less issue-oriented in his complaints. In either case, however, the "outs" complain about the job that the "ins" are performing, and remind the public of the campaign promises that allegedly are not being accomplished.

Similarly, on the UW-O campus both the supporters of calendar reform and its opponents watched carefully to see if the chancellor would falter in some promise he had made to the faculty. In one instance, when the central administration failed to provide the school with the discretionary funds to support faculty research projects, immediate complaints were made that the chancellor was not keeping his word. When this matter was solved and the money was obtained, his promise was kept.

There were rumors, the object of which was to undermine the chancellor and his program. A persistent rumor on the Oshkosh campus was that the referendum did not mean anything and that the calendar changes would have been introduced anyway. One faculty member said, "If Birnbaum got only 20 percent of the vote in the referendum, I am convinced that central administration would implement calendar reform anyway." This continued after the vote in the form of skepticism that a vote really would be held on whether to continue the calendar changes. The Association of University of Wisconsin Faculties (TAUWF), a union on campus, proclaimed:

> Chancellor Birnbaum will soon have the opportunity to demonstrate his good faith in faculty governance when it comes time to determine whether or not the new Calendar will be continued or replaced by the "old" calendar. The Chancellor told the faculty last year that it would be given the opportunity to decide in the Spring of 1977 whether or not we would return to the traditional calendar or stay with the new. TAUWF has heard reports that the faculty may not get to vote on the old vs. the new, but rather on Calendar I vs. Calendar II. If this turns out to be the case, Shared Governance will continue to be a standing joke at Oshkosh.[33]

The political advantage accruing to the opposition is that if dire predictions turn out to be true, the critics can claim inside information; while if false, they can take credit for holding the leadership to its original position. Either

---

[33] *TAUWF Speaks*, Vol. 1, No. 3, March 30, 1976.

result may be used to gain converts. The campus organizations attempted to enhance their credibility and support by opposition to the calendar.

7. As a result of a power change the symbols of power and influence are revised abruptly. Relationships and knowledge which once were prized highly are suddenly of little political value, as other relationships and information gain importance. This can be referred to as the "currency" or means of exchange within an organization.

In electoral politics the changes are pervasive. Not only are power relationships changed at the national level among elected and appointed officials, formal and informal advisors are shifted immediately. Congressmen and Senators immediately gain or lose access to the President and his staff; lobbyists and their clients are affected. Persons whose livelihood is dependent upon maintaining access to those in power immediately attempt to make the change as gracefully as possible. Although most make that change, rarely does any individual, or group of individuals, do as well under one regime as they might under another.

These changes were dramatic at Oshkosh. Earlier the "currency" on campus, the elements of exchange which were valued highly, included longevity, institutional loyalty, and a low profile. Administrators had significantly more influence than the faculty, and persons readily left the faculty to join the administration. Access to power, routes of recruitment, were informal, internal, consistent, and pervasive.

All of this changed under Robert Birnbaum. He instituted formalized search and screen procedures for hiring personnel and tried to institutionalize the criteria by which personnel were retained, promoted, and given tenure. The emphasis, the "currency," was upon expertness. Anyone who did not measure up, fell by the way.

A few individuals adapted well to the new administration, indeed had been waiting for such a change. However, more people, particularly those in positions of power within the previous administration, did not adapt but persisted in behavior which no longer conformed to accepted currency.

Organizational change efforts, like political campaigns, are highly complicated undertakings, the success of which is by no means certain. An effort at organizational change, particularly in an organization in which the authority of the leadership is sharply limited, is one of few options. Birnbaum observed at a meeting of the faculty shortly after his arrival:

> A colleague of mine, presently leading one of the world's outstanding research universities and formerly graduate dean at another such institution, once commented that his job consisted of going around his campus dealing with fires—pouring water on some, and oil on others. A Chancellor may carry around a small box of matches with which, when occasion permits, he may start a few fires of his own. But it is the faculty, as individuals and as a collegium, which ultimately decide the future of an institution.[34]

---

[34]Robert Birnbaum, *Speech to University of Wisconsin Faculty*, March 6, 1974.

Leadership in higher education requires a means of rewarding new behavior of those within the organization, as well as providing sanctions for individuals and subunits within the organization which persist in old behavior. The leadership must appeal negatively and positively to the symbols which are important to the members of the organization.

Other Aspects of Calendar Reform

Calendar reform was not a proposal for an organization to produce a different more desirable product, such as might occur in a business organization. It was not a proposal which required major changes of personnel, although changes occurred, partly as a consequence of the proposal. Rather it was a proposal which did not appear to *demand* major changes of the faculty, but appeared to *permit* changes on the part of those faculty who were interested. However, money was made available to encourage faculty innovation, meaning that those faculty and departments that responded to student interests benefitted. This was a crucial part of the process which changed the reward system of the institution. In the previous administration, familiarity, informality, longevity, and faculty invisibility were rewarded. In the new system, change, aggressive behavior, and responsiveness to students brought rewards. Ultimately, new reward systems lead to behavorial changes and to value changes in an organization.

What was at one level a simple idea—changing the sequence and length of course offerings—permeated the entire organization and forced virtually everyone in the system to change, or at least examine, what he or she was doing. At a minimum, it required faculty to change their courses from 17 weeks to 14 weeks. It required housing personnel to develop new billing schedules and rates. It required registration personnel to develop new methods to accommodate the continuous registration process.

The reform was structural: it changed the way the organization went about things, rather than attempting to change the attitude or the personnel within the organization. The latter connotes the inspirational, "charismatic" leadership image which people typically evoke when they contemplate organizational change. Because the difference was in some ways so subtle for so many individuals, some people on campus insisted that little had changed. One faculty member, very involved in the calendar reform proposal, observed: "Nothing has changed because everything had changed at once. It's like Copernicus. Once he discovered that we revolve around the sun rather than the sun revolving around the earth, nothing was the same any more."

Implementation

Baldridge,[35] in his study of New York University, suggested that after a large conflict occurs in an organization and a decision is reached, implementation of the decision is a fairly routine bureaucratic procedure. The experience at the UW-O suggests that conflict can assume different forms at various stages; and the formal decision may drive the conflict "underground." After formal adoption of the calendar changes at the UW-O, the struggle continued, but in a less formal and public manner. Those opposed to the change, including senior administrators, continued to speak critically of it and to point out the many difficulties in implementing it.

---

[35] Baldridge, *Power and Conflict in the University*.

The vote on calendar reform provided Birnbaum with the authority necessary to implement a major change on the campus. However, it also committed him to make good on promises to the faculty for which they now could hold him accountable. Because the calendar proposal was almost exclusively his creation, his future success or failure was linked ultimately with this change. Also, because this was such an important proposal, it left little time or energy for Birnbaum or others to initiate other changes. It was left to Birnbaum's successor to improve more specific areas of the institution, such as the high school recruitment program.

IV. ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Economist Mancur Olson developed a theory to explain the behavior of groups and individuals within groups in achieving their goals. He suggested:

> . . .any group or organization, large or small, works for some collective benefit that by its very nature will benefit all of the members of the group in question. Though all of the members of the group therefore have a common interest in obtaining this collective benefit, they have no common interest in playing the cost of providing that collective good. Each would prefer that the others pay the entire cost, and ordinarily would get any benefit provided whether he had borne part of the cost or not.[36]

At the UW-O each faculty member and administrator suffered as a result of the problems the organization experienced during the 1970s. Some untenured faculty members lost their jobs; those who remained had their job security threatened. Most people on the campus recognized that changes would have to be made to help the organization and themselves, although there was no consensus as to what the changes should be. Ideally, the changes would not affect any given individual negatively, but would result in greater personal rewards: higher pay, greater economic security, and higher morale in the organization.

Birnbaum's calendar reform proposal did not make such promises to members of the faculty and administration. Rather, he promised that everyone would have to give up something in order to help the institution. He was very aware of the difficulties in obtaining approval for such a proposal. In his presentation to the faculty before they voted on adoption of the calendar change, he noted:

> While it is true that the proposed calendar may have limited negative personal consequences for some, I believe that in the long run it will prove to be a major asset for all. It is difficult, particularly during troubled economic times, to ignore personal or even departmental or college concerns when considering an issue such as this. But our ultimate strength is not as individuals or small sub-groups, but as a university. In the long run, we must protect and develop all of the academic components of the university. Weakness in one will ultimately lead to weakness in all. The strength and viability of each major college of the university is therefore in everyone's self-interest, and we must develop policies which will halt and reverse the erosion of any threatened college.[37]

The individual sacrifices which Birnbaum was asking the faculty to make included reevaluation of course materials to teach subjects over varying periods of time. It also involved shifting work schedules throughout the year so that faculty members, rather than automatically having summers free,

---

[36]Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 21.

[37]Robert Birnbaum, speech to the faculty, October 17, 1974.

would have their free times regulated by student enrollment demands. The most important single factor was the fact that those faculty members who had become accustomed to summer school teaching and salary would no longer have extra compensation if they taught in the summer.

Individual members of organizations were being asked to make sacrifices to help the university and, eventually, themselves. However, the benefits which would accrue to the organization would be realized by each person whether or not they decided to support the calendar reform proposal. What Olson called "public goods" would be available to everyone in the organization, if the change proved successful. This highlights the problem of collecting the individual commitments necessary to attain an overall goal.

At least two additional problems operate in bringing about change in organizations. The first of these is size. The larger an organization the smaller the impact individual members make on the total institution. This often accounts for less loyalty in large organizations and make change more difficult. The UW-O, with 667 administrators and faculty members and 10,415 students in 1973, was a relatively large organization. Olson noted:

> The most important single point about small groups. . .is that they may very well be able to provide themselves with a collective good simply because of the attraction of the collective good to the individual members. In this, small groups differ from larger ones. The larger a group is, the farther it will fall short of obtaining an optimal supply of any collective good, and the less likely that it will act to obtain even a minimal amount of such a good. In short, the larger the group, the less it will further its common interests.[38]

An additional difficulty in obtaining group action is particularly evident in higher education. A college or university is an organization with many professionals. Professionals tend to identify with other individuals with similar training to a greater extent than they do with other faculty members within the university. This often extends, not only to schools and departments, but to subspecialties within disciplines.

The lack of organizational identity is ameliorated in many institutions which have a long and prestigious history. This was described earlier as an organizational saga. Oshkosh and similar schools are particularly lacking in such a saga and, in fact, sometimes suffer from a negative organizational self-image. Thus, it was to the advantage of individual faculty members *not* to identify with their school, but rather to emphasize their professional identification. This is the opposite of those faculty members who enhance their image and prestige by their membership at their college or university.

Organizational change in such an institution must take into account, to an even greater extent than usual, the self-interests of individual faculty. One must not evoke the school's history to develop allegiance, but allude to what the school might *become*. Lacking a credible governance structure within the school to assist in bringing about change, the responsibility of developing and promoting ideas for change reside primarily with the president. The leadership must appeal to individual self-interest, and wield the realistic threat that, if the members of an organization do not participate in in bringing about change, "There are forces outside the university which are waiting for their chance to decide our destiny for us."[39]

---

[38]Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*, p. 36.

[39]Birnbaum, speech to the faculty, October 17, 1974.

V. SUMMARY

In seeking relief from the dilemmas faced by former teachers colleges, such as UW-O, there are few clear choices available either within the institution or outside it. At a time when competition for resources is great in both the public and the private sector, more financial resources are not likely to be realized.

In addition, a clear alternative model is not available to help reshape these schools. They developed out of the political support in the areas in which they were located. With increasing demands for accountability and productivity placed upon regents and system administrators, those bodies have little choice but to pass these demands on to the individual schools. The one element which they can change is leadership.

Similarly, the options available to a president are severly limited. He or she often is faced with the prospect of administering cuts in the budget and hewing carefully to an external mandate, while being sensitive to the internal concern that it be done democratically. While central administration and the Regents had to turn to new leadership for change, the new leadership had few strategies available for carrying out that change, and few realistic models from which to choose.

Political strategies were skillfully utilized by the new chancellor. These included mobilizing the membership of the organization by violating few of the symbols to which they strongly held, such as tenure, and simultaneously educating and frightening the faculty by describing the prospects which they might face should they not mobilize for change. In so doing he was able to convince the faculty that they should agree to major changes in the way in which they went about their teaching activities, and to forego summer school income.

As a change strategy, however, it was clear that Birnbaum had to play a very active role in bringing about whatever change was going to be made. He initially appointed a committee to make recommendations regarding calendar changes, and they made minimal proposals. This left it to him to make the major effort, in concert with central administration, which he used selectively as both an adversary and an ally. With faculty and others on campus he stressed his efforts to obtain some autonomy from central administration, sharply contrasting his administration with the previous one. On the other hand, he was able to get central administration to promise additional resources and funding protection, if he was able to bring off calendar reform. Thus, he used Central Administration as leverage in bringing about change.

Such a political strategy involved adept maneuvering and focused upon short-term goals in order to bring about innovation. A long-term, studied effort would not have succeeded.

As the strategy was circumscribed for Birnbaum, so the changes he could suggest also were very limited. He needed to avoid violating major symbols held dear on the campus, such as layoff of tenured personnel. Similarly, proposing major changes in the curriculum would have met with a variety of ideological opposition no matter what their content. Thus, the element of time as a resource was, as in the political strategy adopted, one of the few possibilities remaining.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baldridge, J. Victor. *Power and Conflict in the University.* New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971.

Birnbaum, Robert. Speech to University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Faculty, March 6, 1974.

Birnbaum, Robert. Memo to Ad Hoc Calendar Committee, May 22, 1974.

Birnbaum, Robert. Calendar Paper No. 1, August 28, 1974.

Birnbaum, Robert. Speech to the Faculty, October 17, 1974.

Birnbaum, Robert. "The University of Alternatives: The First Semester of the Oshkosh Calendar Plan," Progress Report to the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, February, 1976.

Clark, Burton R. "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values: A Case Study," *American Sociological Review,* 21 (June, 1956), 327-336.

Clark, Burton R. *The Open Door College.* New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1960.

Clark, Burton R. *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore.* Chicago: Aldine, 1970.

Clark, Burton R. "The Organizational Saga in Higher Education," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 17 (1972), 178-184.

Cross, Patricia K. "New Students in the New World of Postsecondary Education." Paper presented at the American of Higher Education Conference, Chicago, March 1973. (Mimeographed)

Dunham, E. Alden. *Colleges of the Forgotten Americans.* New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1969.

Getzels, Jacob W., Lipham, James M. and Campbell, Roald F. *Educational Administration as a Social Process.* Evanston: Harper and Row, 1968.

Harcleroad, Fred F. and Sagen, H. Bradley. *Developing State Colleges and Universities.* Washington, D.C.: American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1969.

Kayden, Xandra. "The Political Campaign as an Organization." *Public Policy,* 21 (Spring 1973), 263-290.

Leslie, Larry L. and Brugel, John F. "Financing Learner-Centered Reforms," Paper Presented at the 30th Annual National Conference on Higher Education, 1975.

Lunsford, Terry F. "Authority and Ideology in the Administered University" in *The State of the University,* 87-107. Ed. Carlos K. Kruytbosch and Sheldon L. Messinger. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1968.

Olson, Mancur. *The Logic of Collective Action.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Perrow, Charles. "Organizational Prestige: Some Functions and Dysfunctions," *The American Journal of Sociology,* 66 (January 1961), 335-341.

Perrow, Charles B. *Organizational Analysis: A Sociological View.* Belmont, California, 1970.

Riesman, David. *Constraints and Variety in American Education.* New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, Inc., 1958.

Sagen, H. Bradley and Harcleroad, Fred F. "The Developing State Colleges and Universities: Innovation or Imitation?" *The North Central Association Quarterly,* 44 (Spring, 1970), 345-351.

Selznick, Philip. *Leadership in Administration.* New York: Harper and Row, 1957.

Smith, Donald K. and Percy, Donald E. Letter to Robert Birnbaum, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, August 23, 1974, p. 1.

TAUWF Speaks, Vol., No. 3, March 30, 1976.

The Oshkosh Calendar Plan: Resolving the Steady-State Dilemma. Washington, D.C.: American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1976.

Thompson, James D. and McEwen, William J. "Organizational Goals and Environment: Goal Setting as an Interaction Process," *American Sociological Review,* 23 (February 1958), 23-31.

Woodring, Paul. *The Higher Learning in America: A Reassessment.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968.